

COLORADO RIVER RECOVERY PROGRAM
FY 2000 ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT

RECOVERY PROGRAM
PROJECT NUMBER: PIP-4

I. Project Title: Capital Improvement Projects in the Grand Junction, Colorado area.

II. Principal Investigator(s): Jone Wright
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III. Project Summary:

The mainstem Colorado River from Rifle, Colorado to Lake Powell, Utah supports populations of Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, razorback sucker, and bonytail. One focal point of recovery efforts of these endangered fish is the 15-Mile Reach of the Colorado River immediately upstream of the confluence with the Gunnison River, near Grand Junction, Colorado. Capital Improvement projects concerning this 15-Mile Reach include:

(1) **Grand Valley Water Management**—a proposal to develop a water supply alternative for the 15-Mile Reach of the Colorado River. Included in this project is making efficiency improvements to the Government Highline Canal part of Reclamation's Grand Valley Project, and delivering surplus water from Green Mountain Reservoir to the Grand Valley Power Plant near Palisade. These improvements are expected to conserve a significant amount of project water to benefit the habitat of the four endangered fish in the 15-Mile Reach.

Progress

The one year agreement for surplus water delivery from Green Mountain Reservoir to the Grand Valley Power Plant was executed. A meeting is scheduled in January 2001 to begin negotiating an agreement with the City of Grand Junction and potentially the towns of Palisade and Fruita for surplus water delivery from Green Mountain Reservoir.

The contract to begin construction of the canal checks (small dams) in the Government Highline Canal was awarded in July 2000. Construction began in November 2000.

Completion date

The entire Grand Valley Water Management Project is scheduled for completion in 2002. The canal checks are scheduled for completion by the spring of 2001.

(2) Price-Stubb Diversion Dam– provide fish passage on the Colorado River upstream of the 15-Mile Reach.

Progress

In April 1999, Reclamation released the draft environmental assessment (EA) for public review and comment. Also in April 1999, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a draft EA on an amendment to license a non-Federal hydroelectric power plant which would require use of the Price-Stubb Dam. If FERC approves the amendment, Reclamation would construct a fish ladder in cooperation with the licensee. Reclamation is waiting for a decision from FERC on the amendment to the hydropower license before preparing a final EA.

Completion date

Completion date for fish passage at the abandoned Price-Stubb Dam is somewhat dependent on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's actions but is hopefully scheduled for April 2003.

(3) Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam–Provide fish passage on the Colorado River upstream of the 15-Mile Reach.

Progress

Reclamation is preparing a draft environmental assessment which is scheduled for release in the spring 2001. To avoid duplication of information, the EA will “tier” off the Grand Valley Irrigation Company's passage.

Completion date

Completion date for fish passage at the Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam is April 2003.

IV. Study Schedule:

Grand Valley Water Management

Initial year: FY93

Final year: FY02

Price-Stubb Diversion Dam Passage (Abandoned)

Initial year: FY98

Final year: April 03

Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam Passage

Initial year: FY98

Final year: April 03

V. Relationship to RIPRAP:

GENERAL RECOVERY PROGRAM SUPPORT ACTION PLAN

VI. Increase public awareness and support for the endangered fishes and the recovery program.

VI. Accomplishment of FY 2000 Tasks and Deliverables, Discussion of Initial Findings and Shortcomings:

Grand Valley Water Management

Task: To gain water user cooperation and construction of the improvements to the Government Highline Canal so late summer flows will be enhanced.

Task: Develop public awareness and support and/or informed consent for this water conservation project.

- **Held one-on-one meetings with water users—Ongoing
- **Held one-on-one meetings with potentially affected interests—Ongoing
- **News article in The Daily Sentinel “River district pleased with fish plan”—12/99
- **Letter to Editor, The Daily Sentinel “State must control the process of endangered species recovery”—3/00
- **Letter to the Editor—The Daily Sentinel “Millions of dollars are wasted trying to protect trash fish—5/00
- **Letter to the Editor, The Daily Sentinel “Federal agencies ought to protect game fish rather than trash fish—7/00
- **News article in The Glenwood Post “Water users rely on backup reservoirs as Green Mountain is repaired”—8/00
- **News article in The Daily Sentinel “Extra water for kayak course flowing in Colorado”—9/00

Findings and shortcomings:

General opinion of Recovery Program seems to be improving especially with those who see and understand the benefit to their organization.

Price-Stubb Diversion Dam Passage

Task: To develop public awareness and support, to the extent possible, for fish passage at the abandoned Price-Stubb Diversion Dam.

- **Held one-on-one meetings with owners of the dam—Ongoing
- **Held one-on-one meetings with potentially affected interests—Ongoing
- **News release in The Daily Sentinel announcing Reclamation’s plan for a fish passage at the Price-Stubb Diversion Dam were put on hold pending the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s decision on an amendment to license a non-Federal hydroelectric power plant at the dam--10/99
- **Newsletter “Upper Colorado River Fish Passage Update” prepared and distributed—10/99
- **News article in The Daily Sentinel “Palisade-area dam removal awaits ruling about possible power plant”—10/99

Findings and shortcomings:

Delays in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licensing process have caused significant delays in the Recovery Program. Credibility has suffered somewhat due to lack of action.

Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam Passage

Task: Develop public awareness and support and/or informed consent for this project.

- **Held one-on-one meetings with water users—Ongoing
- **Held one-on-one meetings with potentially affected interests—Ongoing
- **News release in The Daily Sentinel announcing Reclamation's intention to prepare a draft environmental assessment on a proposed fish ladder at Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam-- 10/99
- **Newsletter "Upper Colorado River Fish Passage Update" prepared and distributed—10/99
- **News article in The Daily Sentinel "Input sought on proposed fish ladder"—11/99
- **Editorial in The Daily Sentinel "Fishy business (historic irrigation contracts)— 12/99
- **Letter to the Editor by Carol DeAngelis Reclamation's Area Manager, The Daily Sentinel "Federal agency will honor historic irrigation contracts"—12/99
- **Letter to the Editor—The Daily Sentinel "Money for endangered fish will protect state's water rights"—6/00

Findings and shortcomings

None.

VII. Recommendations:

VIII. Project Status:

Grand Valley Water Management—Improvements (check structures)

Price-Stubb Dam—Passage is delayed and should be kept on public involvement activities until successful completion of the fish passage.

Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam—The draft EA should be released for public review in the spring of 2001.

IX. FY 2000 Budget Status

- A. Funds Provided: \$30,000
- B. Funds Expended: \$26,823
- C. Difference: \$ 3,177
- D. Percent of the FY 2000 work completed, and projected costs to complete: 100%
- E. Recovery Program funds spent for publication charges: \$60.00

X. Status of Data Submission (Where applicable):

XI. Signed:	<u>Jone E. Wright</u>	<u>12/7/00</u>
	Principal Investigator	Date

APPENDIX: